

The Cheaters Speculum:

OR, THE New English Rogue.

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Being an Account of the many Notorious *Cheats* and Villanous *Actions* of *William Fuller* the Impostor, from the time of his Birth, to his advancement to the *Pillory*, and late famous settlement in *Bridewel*; with the prodigious steps that he made in that wonderful Expedition, and his present *Behaviour* in that Colledge. To which is added a living Flepy on his deadly Misfortunes



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Rogue, &c.*

William F—r, the Wonder as well as Shame of Mankind, was born at *Milton* near *Stringburn* in *Kent*, in the Year 1674. his Father being by Occupation a Butcher; who having the Misfortune to die a Prisoner in the *Kings-Bench*: His true begotten Son, after several Wild and Extravagant Rogueries by him committed, was put an Apprentice to one Mr. *James Hartley* a Coney-Wool Cutter in *Shoe-Lane*, the 4th of *January*, 1686; in whose Service he continued (tho with much uneasiness) till some time after the pretended Prince of *Wales* was born, as his said Master (now in *Lug-gate*) is ready to attest; therefore a special Evidence you may be sure, for such a dark Intrigue. Passing by his ungrateful flight from his Master, and his strange, or at least pretended Discoveries of the Lord knows what at *White-Hall*, in his imaginary Post of the Back-Stairs; and his changing his Religion almost as often as his Cloaths. I shall hasten to relate some, (for 'tis impossible to set down all in this narrow Compass) of his most notorious Cheats and Villanies, as followeth, viz. Having been in *France* for some time, where 'tis suppos'd he pick'd up his Plot, &c. he came to *London*, & bluster'd under no less a Dignity than the Major of a Regiment; in which disguise he put several scurvy tricks on Persons of no mean Quality, by pretended Bills of Exchange; particularly 50 l. from a Mercer in *Covent-Garden*. From a Pastry Cook near *St. James's*, by pretending to prosecute Roman Catholics, he hook'd out of him near 80 l. and under pretence of being a Country Gentleman, in the Year 1691, cheated a Colonel in *Westminster* of Considerable Sums of Money, besides what he ran in the Tick for Board, Lodging, &c. but at last the Colonel having danced a great while to the Tune of Patience; he snaps him up and sends him to his Father's Lodging in the *King's-Bench* Prison, till he had the opportunity of Liberty, under pretence of going out with the Keeper to buy his Wife a Top-knot and Commode, leaping out of one Boat into another, and so got off: After this, *England* being too hot for him, he makes for *Ireland*; where lodging at a Barbers House in *Dublin*, he wheedled a Dutch Officer out of a 100 l. and some other Persons of great Sums

Sung, by drawing Counterfeit Bills of Exchange on an Eminent Merchant in *Wood-street*, and made use of the most Honourable Persons Names in *London*, to countenance his Cheats; by which means he run in his Landlords Debt near a 100 *l.* and being asked for it, he prevail'd on a poor Honest Citizen to be bound for it, with plenty of Oaths and large promises of returning it as soon as he came to *England*.

Soon after his arrival in *England*, he embarked for *Flanders* and in his way thither wheedled 10 *l.* out of the Capt. of Ship, telling him he was such a Collonel, and writes him a Bill to receive the Money at *Amsterdam*; but when he came to get his Bill accepted, he was surprized to hear the Gentleman say he knew no such Collonel, and so was forced to make the best of a bad Market.

Being flush'd with good success, he had the impudence to pretend himself a Person of great Quality, and under that disguise so far insinuated himself into the favour of a certain *English* Major General, that he suck'd 200 Guineas from him; and had the Honour to Ride every day with him in his Coach; but as soon as he saw an opportunity, he gave the General the Dog to hold.

From hence he marches (with his Pocket well lin'd) to the *Hague*; where he gave himself the Title of Baron *Fuller*, and under that Nominal Dignity, he play'd many a villainous Cheat, and liv'd at a damnable high Rate, and among other things playing all his Money away one Night at Gaming, threw among them a Bill of Exchange of 30 *l.* payable to *William* Baron *Fuller* or his Order, which pass'd as currant as right Sterling *English*; but getting near its (supposed) intrinsic value, he left both the Game and Gamsters to make the best Market they cou'd of his piece of Paper. Soon after meeting with a *Dutch* Officer lately arrived from *England*, *Fuller* gets acquainted with him, and under the Notion of being Sir *William Fuller*, he without much scruple obtain'd 200 Guilders from him, leaving a Bill of his hand to receive it in *London*.

Being at *Rotterdam*, he grew very intimate with a Scotch Merchant, who wonderfully doating on him above the rest, *Fuller* takes the Advantage, and pawns a Bill of 300 *l.* *English* Money upon him to receive at *Amsterdam*, and got him to lend him 100 *l.* all under the old pretences, that his Money was not arriv'd according to his appointment, and some days after finding the Scotch Man would suddenly go for *Amsterdam*, he wheedled him out of 50 *l.* more, which the Scot, or rather Sot, to make even Money on's paid him without the least scruple, and takes the Paper Mortgage for his Security, leaving *Fuller* to rejoice at his Absen

But about a Month after coming to Helvetfluys, he had the unhappiness to meet with a particular friend of the General he had Cheated of the 200 Guineas, who taking Sir William aside, tells him his Crime, and demands the Money forthwith, otherwise threaten'd to jayl him for a Cheat. So that Fuller being astonish'd, was forc'd to pay the 200 Guineas back again, and glad of escaping so, but was forc'd to make up the Sum with his Watch, which mov'd the Gentleman to that degree, that he threw him five Guineas back again, and bid him Cheat all the World, except a Soldier; adding that that little wou'd serve him for working Tools to set up with.

Being brought to the narrow scantling of 5 Guineas, and meeting with some English Merchants who were waiting for a Passage gets to Harwich into their acquaintance, and telling abundance of Lies, he in short went on board with them, and by the way told them that his Coach and Six Horses were order'd by his Letters to meet him at Harwich, in which they should bear him Company to London: and thereupon gets 10 l. from one of them, upon promise of payment at his arrival; but his promised Coach not coming, he with the Merchants were forc'd to accept of a Hir'd Coach to London: where taking leave of his Fellow Travellers, by inviting them to a fat Buck Feast the Tuesday following, at the Queens-head-Tavern. where he promised to pay the Money borrow'd, but tho' they came at the time appointed, no Fuller appear'd.

Passing by the affront he offer'd to the House of Commons in 91, and his being voted a Cheat, and his Pillory advancement for it. Soon after he wheedl'd 15 l. out of Dr. Oates, for which piece of Ingratitude to a sworn Brother of the Lying Order, the Doctor never gave him a good word since. Being at Chichester, he drew a Counterfeit Note for 5 l. on a Banker in Lombard-street, which he impos'd on Mr. Barnes the Carrier, who when he came to Town (tho' too late) found out the Cheat tho' he had lost the Cheater. Coming incognito to London, he took a Lodging at a Cane-Shop just without Temple-Bar. at Capt. Daintries; where pretending himself (as usually he did) a Person of Quality, and being disappointed of his Rents, and returns out of the Country, and one day pretended to be wounded by some Ruffins, who hinder'd his Journey into Kent to receive his Rents, under pretence of seeking Revenge of his pretended Assassins, borrows a Brace of Pistols to the value of 6 Guineas, and march't off Bag and Baggage to Gravesend, leaving his name in the Capt's Book as a testimony of his acknowledgments: And afterwards being come to Canterbury with his Man at his Heels; where the People of that place, instead of putting tricks upon Travellers were sufficiently trick'd by

them, which for want of room I can't particularize. A Gentlewoman in that Country having an Extravagant Son, who was sentenc'd to die,; Fuller hearing she was able and willing to lay down a Considerable sum to save his Life, went to her and proffer'd his Service, telling her he could not only get a Reprieve, but her Son's Pardon also; by having such Interest with the Earl of Romney and Albermarle. The Mother who gave him over for lost, upon Fullers Request, she agrees to give him 60 l. in Hand. and 40 l. when the Pardon was seal'd; when having accordingly paid the Money, he marcht off directly into Yorkshire, leaving the mournful Cheated Mother out of her Money, and the Poor Man out of his Life.

Having hammer'd out (some time after) a unsensical Book call'd his plain Proof, and sold it Mr. H.——'s for a considerable Sum, he at last so far impos'd upon her, as to wheedle a much greater out of her afterwards, which he will pay when the Devil's blind, unless his new Imvolment in Bride well proves more beneficial to him than it has done to his Predecessors.

But to proceed, in 1698, he being reduc'd to great Wants, comes to a small Village in Kent, where one Anne Brown a poor Widdow woman being at the Door, he asked for Lodging, and being admitted, he told her that he came of an Honourable Family in that Country, but being bound for other Men, had quite ruin'd himself and his Children, therefore was now forced to work for his Living, and thereupon desired her to get him some Hay-making, which she accordingly did, for which he thank'd her, and he agreed to give her 2 s. 8 d. per week for Dyes and Lodging, and after a Weeks work he refus'd his wages, telling his Landlady, he would let it lie in his Master's Hands till it was a good Lump, which she finding true upon enquiry, was well pleas'd. In fine, he work'd so long till his Wages came to 40 Shillings, which he having receiv'd, comes home one Night and tells her of it, and that he would pay her in the Morning, which the old Woman not at all doubting, by reason of his fine Tongue. But the next Morning, instead of performing his promise, after having sent her into the Cellar for a pot of Ale, he bolts the Door on the out side, and gently march'd off, leaving his old Landlady to get her enlargement by a more civil Customer.

Going from thence near *Horsham* in *Suffex*, he overtook a Taylor as ragged as both their manners, who after Fuller found him in a necessitous Condition, and fit for any en-

surprising project, told him that he had thought of an invention that would help them both to Money enough. (Quoth he) you shall sham the blind Man, and I'll be the guide, and i'm sure we shall make good Wages on't; the Taylor loving Idleness as well as Fuller, consented to the Project, and accordingly the next day, they got some seering Candle, which seered up his Eye-lids so artificially, that he seem'd blind indeed, so they went away, rambling all over Surrey and Hampshire, and in a short time got about 4*l*. and afterwards going into *Wiltshire*, where Fuller (being *Fadas*, for he kept the bag) was minded to cheat the counterfeited blind of his share, when being to lead him over a Plank that lay cross a Brook, Fuller lead him besides it, where he left the blind Man in a very wet pickle, both comfortless and pennyless, in order to get his Eyes open to find his treacherous Fellow Traveller, but it was to as little purpose, as to look for a Needle in a Bottle of Hay.

At Blandford in Dorsetshire, he made a Counterfeit pass to save his Charges in his way to Newcastle, but was detected at Thornbury; and he corrected at the Whipping Post, by Order of Justice Manning. Being somewhat warm'd with the Beadles lusty Lashes at Thornbury, as he went on the Road, he overtook a Cart loaded with Hay, and coming into Abingdon an Innkeeper seeing Fuller follow the Cart in a Countrey Habit, took him to be the owner, and thereupon asked him the price of it; Fuller told him 28 Shillings, and thereupon had the impudence to fetch him a handful of it, telling him 'twas as good as ever Nose was put to; so that while the Carter was talking with some others, Fuller clapt up a Bargain for 26 Shillings, and gave him a Receipt for the Money, desiring the Innkeeper to bid his Man make haste home, so flinging down his Six-pence, marched off with his lucky Booty, leaving the Innkeeper to make the best of a bad Market.

After this, coming to Bramyard in Herefordshire, he so far insinuated on the easie nature of the Curate, by pretending himself to be a Cambridge-Schollar, that he lent him his Horse and Gown to ride to Church, which was some half a mile distance, in order to preach a Sermon for him; the Parson and his Wife going the nearest way over the Meads to the Church, he found his Parishioners wondering to see him without his black Gown. but he told them he had lent his Gown to a young Cambridge-Schollar to preach for him that Morning, who he was sure would make a pretty piece of work on't, and truly so he did, for

for he rode away with his Horse, Gown and Cassock, and left the Congregation to go home to Dinner without a Sermon, and the Parson without his Horse, &c. and at *Henly upon Thames*, at the *Cathern Wheel*, having run about 3 l. in the Score in 4 days time, he march'd off on Foot, and left his Horse and his Landlord to dispute the Reckoning.

In his way to *London*, near *Maidenhead Thicket*, seeing a Gentleman come riding after him, he laid himself down, pretending he heard something extraordinary, and the Gentleman being inquisitive to know what it was, *Fuller* replied, that till then, he did not believe there was such things as *Faries*, but now he was convinced by hearing them not only talk, but making such ravishing Harmonies of all sorts of Musick as never was heard in this World, and then laid his Ear down close again to the Ground, and then seem'd to admire it. The Gentleman being desirous to hear this pleasant Melody, desires *Fuller* to hold his Horse, and while he was attentive in listning with his Ear close to the Ground, *Fuller* whips upon his Horse, and rides away with all speed towards *Slough*, where being near the Town, he turns the Horse loose, in order to let him find out his usual Inn; and as he thought, it so happened, for he made into the sign of the *Royal-Oak*, and the Chamberlain seeing him without his owner, Crys out Master, here's Mr. P. ———'s Horse, which *Fuller* hearing, told the Innkeeper that Mr. P. ——— had sent him with his Horse from the *White-Hart* in *Maidenhead*, desiring him to send him Ten Pound, Yes, says the Innkeeper, a 100 l. without any pledge if he desires it, so that he paid the 10 l. immediately, and took *Fuller's* Receipt for it, who you may be sure did not stay long to dispute, for some hours after the owner of the Horse comes in his Jack-boots, puffing and blowing; Sir, says the Inkeeper, what need had you to send your Horse to me for 10 l. when your own Note had been sufficient for ten times as much. Why, is my Horse here, says the Gentleman? Yes, says the Host, but I let the Man have 10 l. that brought him on your Account: The Gentleman damn'd the Messenger, but was glad he had borrow'd no more upon him, for he valu'd his Horse at 40 Guineas.

After his coming to *London*, he fell to his old Trade of writing *Chams* and Stories, which were believed by abundance of Knaves and Fools about Town, but pushing the jest too far, he was by both Houses of Parliament, order'd to be prosecuted in good Earnest for a Cheat, which was done accordingly, he being found guilty, and Sentenc'd to the

the Pillory, and afterwards to *Bridewel*, there to be whip'd and held to hard Labour, where we now leave him till the 14th of *October* next, where multitudes of all Ages, Sexes, and Qualities pays him daily Visits to see him handle the Beetle, and beat that Hemp which all along threaten'd him with Destruction, which when he has accomplish'd, and paid his Fine of a Thousand Marks for his Fees, he will be at liberty to set up his old Trade again; for without all question, he'll not be un furnish'd with a Stock to begin with.

His ELEGY.

Lament ye Females, who lov'd his Canting,
 Since all his Fleebly motions now are wanting.
 Sure every pious Dame, and Mother's Daughters
 Will with wet Eyes drop sympathetick Water.
 Tell me ye fair ones, is it not a pity?
 He should be snatch'd from Ladies in the City,
 To be thus rudely exercis'd by Flogging,
 Who was so fit for Nightly sports and Flogging,
 A Musser take the Whip, says they, it spoils him,
 And curs'd be the Dirt and Eggs that moil'd him,
 Cold is that Corps accusom'd once to warm ye,
 Who us'd with Sword in Hand to mount and Storm ye:
 Mute is that Tongue, so sweetning and so daring,
 The Noisome Hemp has stop'd him now from swearing.
 These small white Hands are full of plaguy Blisters,
 That has so often stroak'd his pious Sisters;
 Grim Death a damp upon his fancy strikes,
 And all is stiff but what a Lady likes.
 While Crouds of Mobb, to see him fills the Door,
 Which makes *Bridewel*, much FULLER than before.

FINIS.

